

Del Norte & Curry County

Health & Fitness

Guide



Del Norte
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We are here for you

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND HUMAN SERVICES

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PUBLIC HEALTH

- Public Health Clinic
- CalFresh Healthy Living
- Tobacco Use Prevention
- Oral Health
- Youth Prevention Program
- Coastal Connections
- Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention
- Maternal Child Adolescent Health
- Medical Health Operational Area Coordinator
- Child Health and Disability Prevention
- Health Care for Children in Foster Care
- California Children Services
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome
- Communicable Disease Program
- Immunization Program
- Emergency Preparedness



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Health & Wellness During COVID-19

The field of Public Health has recently received quite the public awareness. As the novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, spread across various countries in 2019, public health organizations were responsible in strategizing how to protect the health of individuals. The American Public Health Association defines public health as “the practice of preventing disease and promoting good health within groups of people, from small communities to entire countries.”¹ Although doctors may treat those who are sick or injured, public health professionals work to improve quality of life for all. This can include providing vaccinations to prevent the spread of disease, educating the community on healthy habits or the risks of tobacco and alcohol, among many other programs.

The Del Norte County Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Branch offers a variety of services to promote a healthy lifestyle for the community. During these uncertain times, the staff are working hard to provide resources and information for the public in regards to the impact of COVID-19, as well as resources for healthy living, tobacco prevention, and much more.

For months now, the routines of our daily lives have changed drastically for many. COVID-19 became a pandemic that affects people worldwide and the impact of COVID-19 continues each day. Many have adjusted to working from home, schools have switched to distance learning, face coverings are required wherever one goes, and social distancing is essential to preventing transmission of this virus. There is no doubt that these changes can have a significant impact on an individual's health and wellbeing so it's important to find ways to manage one's overall health and wellness through self-care and healthy habits. Here are some ways to help manage your health during these trying times.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

According to the World Health Organization, self-care is the behaviors one does to take care of their health. It can include hygiene, nutrition, healthy eating habits, active lifestyle, and much more². During these trying times it can be difficult navigating this new normal. It can be a struggle to get children to participate in distance learning or separating life from work while working from home. It is important to remember that taking time to care for yourself is as essential as taking time to care for your loved ones³. Here are some self-care tips to help you build resilience:

- 1) To reduce stress and anxiety try to limit time spent watching the news. Research has shown that watching the news frequently can increase stress and anxiety levels so limit this activity to once or twice a day¹².
- 2) Find healthy ways to cope with stress. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends taking deep breaths, stretching, meditation, and getting plenty of sleep to help manage stress¹³.
- 3) Find ways to stay positive. Whether it's practicing positive self-talk to appreciate yourself and the tasks you do each day, smiling more, or giving compliments to others, positivity builds resiliency and is essential to maintaining health and wellness¹⁴.
- 4) Stay Connected. Although social distancing may keep family and friends apart physically, it doesn't mean that you can't stay in touch. Have conversations and share how you are feeling with others. Whether it's through virtual platforms like Skype, Zoom, or Facebook Video Calling, keeping in contact with friends, neighbors, and loved ones can help to lower stress and promote strong relationships¹⁵.

HAVE HEALTHY HABITS

There is no doubt that the stay-at-home order and social distancing has affected everyone. Many are facing challenges with limited access to gyms, recreation centers, restaurants, and much more. This can make getting in regular exercise difficult, and gaining unhealthy habits that include doing things when feeling bored or stressed. Here are some ways to staying active and eating healthy during COVID:

- 1) Exercising helps to release endorphins that boost

mood, it also helps with improving sleep, and reduces risks of depression and anxiety⁴. Staying active and regular physical activity, even when at home, benefits both body and mind, keeps your body healthy, and decreases the chance of long term health issues such as heart disease and diabetes, stroke, and various cancers - all conditions that can increase susceptibility to COVID-19⁴.

- 2) There are a variety of workout options available; why not try something you haven't done before? Maybe try exercise classes online, play active video games, do some muscle & balance training or virtual Zumba dance party or Yoga and Pilates, boxing? The list goes on. Ask your children to join in with you to make it a fun activity for the family³. Use this time at home with your family as an opportunity to exercise more and explore creative ways to do it. There are many fun ways to get daily physical activity- going for a walk with your friend (just staying six feet apart and wearing a mask), gardening, dancing to your favorite music, playing with your kids-jump rope, hide and seek, hopscotch, or frisbee. Working from home can be challenging; so remind yourself to take a short break from sitting by doing 3-4 minutes of light intensity physical movement, such as walking or stretching, which will help ease your muscles and improve blood circulation and muscle activity.⁴ Staying active and regular physical activity also improves bone and muscle strength and increases balance, flexibility, and fitness⁴. The key is to find exercise routines and physical activities that fit your lifestyles and abilities and do them regularly throughout the day and make them a way of life. Having accountability partners such as your friends, family members, or using online apps can help you maintain healthy habits. Most importantly, building healthy habits takes time, and it can be challenging, so be patient and flexible, and enjoy the process of your small wins, which will lead to big healthy victories over time! Please visit the Del Norte CalFresh Healthy Living website for more physical activity ideas and resources <https://delnortecalfresh.org/physical-activity/> or call 707-464-3191 ext.2830
- 3) Eat healthy and well-balanced meals. Healthy and well-balanced meals can help us cope with stress during the COVID-19 pandemic. Good nutrition can also help our body's ability to prevent, fight, and recover from infections by supporting our immune systems.⁵ Good nutrition is really about having a well-rounded diet which includes a variety of food, like fruits and vegetables. Try to eat a mix of whole grains such as whole wheat, brown rice, legumes, lentils, plenty of fruits and vegetables, and some foods from animal protein sources such as lean meat, fish, eggs, and milk. Try to add more healthy fats in your diet, such as olive oil, seeds, and nuts, for your brain and heart health. Good hydration is crucial for optimal health and our immune systems. Drinking water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages is a simple way to limit our sugar intake and excess calories. Staying hydrated is one of the most important things we can do for our health, especially during a pandemic. Healthy eating can be challenging for many of us during these stressful times. There is no doubt that stress can affect our eating patterns negatively. The key is to make every bite count by focusing on nutrient-dense foods and beverages, limiting those higher in added sugars, saturated fat, sodium, and staying within calorie limits, and starting with small changes, which will lead to big healthy victories over time. Eating a healthy and balanced diet is not easy, especially during a pandemic. It takes a community effort to make healthy and balanced eating more accessible, appealing, and affordable to all in Del Norte County. Please visit the Del Norte CalFresh Healthy Living website for more healthy eating ideas and resources <https://delnortecalfresh.org/healthy-eating/> or call 707-464-3191 ext. 2830
- 4) Find support to quit tobacco use. According to the CDC, tobacco use is one of the leading causes of preventable disease, disability, and death in the nation¹¹. Roughly 34 million adults smoke cigarettes that affect about 58 million nonsmokers by exposing them to

secondhand smoke¹¹. Smoking also causes more than 480,000 deaths each year, including 41,000 deaths due to secondhand smoke¹¹. Smoking has been found to cause cancer, heart disease, stroke, lung disease and other chronic health conditions¹¹. COVID-19 has been found to cause severe respiratory problems and research has shown that smoking and vaping significantly increases the risk of severe COVID-19 symptoms and death⁹. It is also found to negatively affect the immune system and its responsiveness to infections. This puts smokers at risk of being vulnerable to other infectious diseases as well⁹. In fact, youth and young adults who use e-cigarettes are five times more likely to contract COVID-19 than non-users¹⁰. The COVID-19 pandemic is a good time to consider and try quitting. If you or someone you love would like to quit, talk with your doctor about cessation options or call the California Smokers' Helpline for free support and counseling to quit smoking, vaping, or other tobacco use. The California Smokers' Helpline can be reached at 1-800-No-Butts or visit nobutts.org. Free cessation services are available via call, text (by texting 'Quit Smoking' to 66819), or through their app.

COVID-19 VACCINE

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued the first emergency use authorization (EUA) for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine to be distributed in the U.S to individuals 16 years of age and older to prevent COVID-19 on December 11, 2020.⁶ On December 18, 2020, the EUA approved the second Vaccine, Moderna, for 18 years of age and older to prevent COVID-19⁷. The FDA has determined that both Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine and the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine have met the statutory criteria for issuing an EUA⁶ and 7. Both vaccines contain messenger RNA (mRNA), which is genetic material, a small piece of the SARS-CoV-2 virus's mRNA that instructs cells in the body to make the virus's distinctive “spike” protein. When a person receives this vaccine, their body produces copies of the spike protein, which does not cause disease but triggers the immune system to learn to react defensively, making an immune response against SARS-CoV-26 and 7. According to Del Norte County Public Health Officer, Warren Rehwaltdt, M.D.'s Public Service Announcement issued on 2/10/2021, the Del Norte County Public Health, along with community partners, distributed almost 2200 doses to date, not including all the prison and the hospital doses⁸. Del Norte County follows the State's priority phases and tiers; decisions about vaccinations are generally based on the current supply of vaccines and the capacity to vaccinate. Please check the latest COVID-19 Vaccination information at the website, COVID-19 Information Hub, <https://www.covid19.dnco.org/> and click Vaccines. If you are eligible based on the State's priority phases and tiers schedule, please contact your medical providers or Del Norte Public Health to schedule an appointment to get your COVID-19 vaccinations. If you are not currently eligible for vaccination, please be patient and keep yourself updated about who will be eligible next for the vaccine. Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 will be one of the best ways to protect yourself and everyone around you. If you are protected from getting COVID-19, you cannot pass the disease to others.

PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM AND RESOURCES

Del Norte County Public Health is engaged in a broad range of activities designed to promote good health in individuals, families, and the community. For additional information, please check Del Norte Public Health website, <http://www.co.del-norte.ca.us/departments/health-human-services/public-health> and contact (707) 464-0861 for more information.

We provide a variety of programs including:
 -CalFresh Healthy Living Program, also known as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Ed- Please check the CalFresh Healthy Living Facebook page at Champions for Change in Crescent City, <https://www.facebook.com/ChampionsforChangeCrescentCity/> for the up-to-date nutrition education and physical activity classes and resources and information.
 -Tobacco Use Prevention Program (TUPP)

-California Children's Services (CCS)
 -Children Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) Program
 -Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care (HCPCFC)
 -Communicable Disease Surveillance Program
 -California Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP)
 -Maternal Child Adolescent Health (MCAH) Program
 -Immunization Assistance Program (IAP)
 -TB Testing
 -Adult Immunizations
 -Immunizations for Uninsured/Underinsured Children (VFC)
 -Coastal Connections
 -Prevention Programs

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The Northern California Community Blood Bank – Our community blood bank

The Northern California Community Blood Bank was incorporated in 1951 by a group of local physicians who recognized the need for a local independent blood center not reliant of out of area management, communication, and transportation. Today the blood Bank remains a local, non-profit corporation based in Eureka. NCCBB employs, 53 individuals ranging from telephone recruiters who are high school or college students, to Registered Nurses to Clinical Laboratory Scientists. The organization has an all-volunteer Board of Director and is not part of a hospital system or the American Red Cross. The Blood Bank's mission is to meet the needs of patients in this community and that can't be accomplished without the support of volunteer blood donors from Smith River to Benbow and east to Hoopa.

As most people are aware blood is classified into the major groups A, B, O and AB and further differentiated by the Rh factor which is either present (+) or absent (-). This system is specific to the red blood cells which are only one of many components derived from human blood.

All blood components have a limited life span:

- Plasma, the watery substance that makes up about 55% of your blood and is used in the treatment of burn victims and to replace lost blood volume can be frozen for up to a year.
- Red Cells, the oxygen carrying component can be refrigerated and stored for 42 days

- Platelets are the component responsible for clotting. They are used in surgery and in the treatment of cancer patients. They are stored at room temperature and constantly agitated to prevent clotting and have a life span of 5 day. That's 5 days from draw to processing and testing to transportation to transfusion.

Because of this limited lifespan it is essential that blood donations are made consistently, throughout the year and not only when there is a significant need. When patients need blood components due to illness or injury, the components they receive are those that were at the blood bank when the patient arrived. These are components that were donated the day before, the week before, even a month before.

Waiting until there is a patient in need to collect blood just doesn't work. Most people know that there is no substitute for human blood components, what many people have never considered is that on the North Coast, in order to maintain and adequate inventory of blood components for local patients, 8,000+ donations and up to 2,000 NEW donors are needed each year.

Research shows that the 2 most common reason people don't donate blood are:
1) They didn't know there was a need and
2) they have never been asked.
There is a need and please consider yourselves asked

Safe ways to lose weight

People have many options when they seek to lose weight. Fad diets may promise quick results, but highly restrictive eating plans or marathon workout sessions can be dangerous. Taking shortcuts or risks in the hopes of losing weight can lead to various health issues and ultimately put people's overall health in serious jeopardy. Thankfully, there are many safe ways people can lose weight.

The first step in safe weight loss is to visit a doctor and let him or her know your plans. The doctor can help determine if a specific eating plan or exercise routine is safe based on your current health. Certain medications can affect metabolism and even contribute to weight gain, so a discussion with the doctor can help ensure people aren't putting their health in jeopardy when their goal is to get healthy.

It's also vital that people trying to lose weight do not believe everything they read online. Research published in The American Journal of Public Health in October 2014 found that most people who search the internet for tips on how to lose weight come across false or misleading information on weight loss, particularly in regard to how quickly they can shed some pounds. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advises the safest amount of weight to lose per week is between one and two pounds.

People who lose more per week, particularly on fad diets or programs, oftentimes are much more likely to regain weight later on than people who took more measured approaches to losing weight. In addition, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics notes it is better to lose weight gradually because if a person sheds pounds too fast, he or she can lose muscle, bone and water instead of fat.

The calories in, calories out concept is something to keep in mind when attempting to lose weight. But metabolism and other factors, including body composition and physical activity levels, also are factors. How well one's body turns calories into fuel also needs to be considered. The best ways to experiment are to start slowly.

- Calculate the average daily calories consumed in a day using a tracker. This can be a digital app on a phone or simply writing down calories on a piece of paper. Track over a few days and see, on average, how many calories you've been consuming.

- Notice extra calories. Many diets can be derailed by eating extra calories that you don't realize you're consuming. That cookie a coworker insists you eat or the leftover mac-and-cheese from your toddler's plate can be sources of extra calories. Be mindful of what's being consumed, including sweetened beverages.

- Explore the science. According to the Scotland-based health service NHS Inform, one pound of fat contains 3,500 calories on average. Cutting calorie intake by 500 calories per day should see you lose 1 pound per week. The same goes in the other direction. Eating 500 more calories per day for a year can result in gaining close to 50 pounds. Small changes really add up.

- Eat filling foods. Choose low-calorie, high quality foods, like vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins. Meals that provide satiety can help eliminate between-meals snacks that can derail your weight loss efforts.

- Seek support as a way to create accountability. Share weight loss plans with a friend or relative who can help monitor your progress and keep you on track.

- Incorporate strength training. Good Housekeeping says the more lean muscle you have, the faster you can slim down. Start slowly with strength training, using free weights or body weights. Aim for strength workouts three to four times per week and alternate with calorie-blasting cardio.

Explore safer ways to lose weight, including taking a gradual approach that promotes long-term weight loss.

The advertisement features a white bloodmobile with "BLOODMOBILE" written on its side, driving on a road. In the background, a map of Northern California is shown with a red dot indicating the service area. The text "Our Community Blood Bank" is prominently displayed in large, bold, yellow letters. Below this, the address "2524 Harrison Ave. Eureka CA 95501" and phone number "(707) 443-8004" are listed, along with the website "nccbb.org". A list of service areas is provided, including: Mad River, Gold Beach, Somes Bar, Garberville, Kneeland, Willow Creek, Blue Lake, Arcata, Fortuna, Smith River, Cullen, Weott, Scotia, Alton, Phillipsville, Myers Flat, Harbor, Fort Dick, Whitethorn, Bayside, Klamath, Carlotta, Gasquet, Hiouchi, Miranda, Orleans, Manila, Saylor, Trinidad, Forks of Salmon, Redcrest, Petrolia, Westhaven, Korbel, Orick, Freshwater, Fields Landing, Alderpoint, Fairhaven, Blocksburg, Fieldbrook, Rio Dell, Happy Camp, Brookings, Eureka, Ferndale, Loleta, Samoa, and Redway.

How often to see the doctor

Routine health checkups are a key part of staying healthy. Older adults may feel like they're always visiting one doctor or another. But what is an acceptable frequency for doctor appointments? The answer isn't always so cut and dry, and many health professionals have mixed feelings even among themselves over the magic number. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends adults over the age of 65 visit the doctor more than twice as often as 18- to 44-year-olds. According to Paul Takahashi, a physician at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., adults should see their primary care physicians at least once a year to make sure diseases are being properly managed and to stay current on preventative screenings.

Visiting the doctor more frequently does not necessarily add up to better health, and it actually can do the opposite. Dr. Peter Abadir, an associate professor of medicine at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, says frequent visits to health facilities where sick people congregate puts one at a higher risk of illness or infection. Visiting the doctor only when necessary is one way to avoid risky exposure.

Doctor visit frequency is not a one-size-fits-all answer. A yearly physical or checkup is a given, even for people who are healthy. People with a family history of certain conditions, like sleep disorders, cancer, high blood pressure, and other conditions, may need to see a doctor more frequently than those with no such histories. In addition, patients may need referrals to certain specialists who work together to provide an overall health plan. That can increase the number of appointments and shorten the intervals between them.

Johnson Memorial Health offers some statistics.

- People visit the doctor four times a year on average.
- Studies show that poor or uninsured people prolong the time between doctor's visits.
- Individuals with high blood pressure may need to see the doctor four times a year to ensure medications are working properly.
- Patients on dialysis see the doctor several times a week.

Dr. Jennifer Caudle, a family physician and assistant professor at Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine in Stratford, NJ, says too often people visit the doctor only when they are really sick. That works to their disadvantage because the appointment will focus only on treating the illness instead of addressing other

preventative care and screenings. Balance is necessary in regard to health care.

Patients can work together with their doctors to develop screening schedules that are customized to their particular profiles. These schedules can be modified as health history information changes or as patients age. Doctors can dial back or increase health visits as needed.



DID YOU KNOW?

Leisure activities may be widely viewed as fun ways to fill up free time, but the benefits of leisure activities extend beyond beating boredom. A 2011 analysis published in the journal *BBA Molecular Basis of Disease* found that leisure activities have a positive impact on cognitive function and dementia.

The analysis, conducted by researchers with the Aging Research Center in Stockholm who examined various studies regarding the relationship between certain activities and cognitive function, defined leisure activity as the voluntary use of free time for activities outside the home. After retirement, leisure time constitutes a large part of many retirees' lives, and finding ways to fill that time is more beneficial than merely avoiding boredom.

The researchers behind the study concluded that the existing research is insufficient to draw any firm conclusions regarding the effects of certain types of leisure activities on the risk for dementia and cognitive decline, though they did note that multi-domain cognitive training has the potential to improve cognitive function in healthy older adults and slow decline in affected individuals.

A multi-domain approach to cognitive training involves memory, reasoning, problem-solving, and map reading, among other activities.

Aging adults who embrace activities that require the use of such skills may find that they're not only finding stimulating ways to fill their free time, but increasing their chances of long-term cognitive health as well.

Keep the Heat On with



The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a federal program that provides assistance to eligible low-income households to manage and meet their home heating & cooling needs.

For info contact:

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Vegan substitutions for everyday cooking

If the wealth of vegan products now available in many mainstream supermarkets is any indication, more people are adopting vegan diets.

A vegan lifestyle is the practice of abstaining from the use of animal products, most notably in regard to diet. Adherents to veganism also avoid animal products in clothing and home as well.

The Vegan Society traces its origins to 1944. The main tenets of veganism have been to “to seek an end to the use of animals by man for food, commodities, work, hunting, vivisection, and by all other uses involving exploitation of animal life by man.” However, the one aspect most readily unifying is a plant-based diet that avoids all animal foods, including dairy, eggs and honey.

As anyone who has followed an alternative diet can attest, finding recipes that also match dietary restrictions can be challenging. But thanks to more widespread adoption of these diets, including veganism, it's now easier than ever to adhere to diets that might once have been hard to follow.

Whether one is vegan or simply wants to include more plant-based items in their cooking, these substitutions can assist home chefs and bakers.

EGG SUBSTITUTIONS

Substituting eggs can be challenging.

Eggs interact with other ingredients in various ways, often helping to emulsify or bring together items into particular textures. About three to four tablespoons of applesauce can replace one egg in baked goods. Bananas also are great binding ingredients in baked items. Silken tofu can be used to create a vegan version of scrambled eggs, and this tofu can be used in many different recipes in place of eggs.

MILK SUBSTITUTES

Scores of milk alternatives are now available on store shelves. From almond milk to coconut milk to soy milk or even hemp milk, consumers have many options. While they may not produce the exact same texture or flavor as cow's milk, these products do quite well in various recipes.

BUTTER SUBSTITUTES

Non-dairy vegan margarines will not contain any traces of lactose or whey in their formulas. Certain varieties may contain hydrogenated oils. Read labels to find suitable products.

CHEESE SUBSTITUTES

Cheese comes in various textures, from grated to firm to soft cheeses. While nothing in vegan cooking can completely mimic cheese, many new products come very close. Certain vegan cheeses can be made from nuts or dairy alternatives, such as almond milk and coconut. Similar fermenting processes give vegan cheese

the bite associated with traditional cheeses. And other ingredients can help it to melt or crumble.

MEAT SUBSTITUTIONS

Replacing meat has never been easier. Various vegetables and fruits can mimic the texture of certain meats. Such is the case with mushrooms, which have a naturally savory, meat-like flavor. Beans

and tofu also serve well in place of meat in dishes. Seitan is made from wheat gluten instead of soybeans, which can be advantageous to anyone who also has a soy allergy and wants to go vegan.

Thanks to the vast array of new products, those who embrace veganism will find they have many ingredients available to add variety and flavor to their cooking.

Health benefits of popcorn



Many people will say that no movie marathon is complete without a big bowl of popcorn. Movies and popcorn have been linked for decades, but popcorn is more than just a must-have on movie night.

Popcorn lovers may be surprised to learn just how healthy this beloved snack can be.

- Popcorn can help lower cholesterol. Like many other foods, popcorn is full of fiber. Fiber attaches to cholesterol particles and helps prevent them from entering the bloodstream and traveling to other parts of the body, according to Verywell Health.
- Popcorn promotes healthy digestion. The same fiber that helps reduce cholesterol also promotes healthy digestion. Popcorn is a whole grain and the high fiber content in popcorn can alleviate constipation by stimulating the peristaltic motion of the smooth intestinal muscles and the secretion of digestive enzymes.
- Popcorn can help regulate blood sugar. The fiber in popcorn can regulate the release and

management of blood sugar and insulin levels, potentially helping people with diabetes.

- Popcorn has disease-fighting properties. OrganicFacts.net says popcorn has polyphenols that act as antioxidants in the body. Antioxidants reduce oxidative stress and can fight against the development of chronic diseases. They also may prevent the development of age-related symptoms like age spots and wrinkles.
- Popcorn is a low-calorie snack. A cup of air-popped popcorn comes in at just around 30 calories. That means you can overindulge a bit on popcorn and it won't lead to overconsumption of calories. One serving of popcorn has five times fewer calories than one serving of potato chips.
- Popcorn keeps you feeling full. Thanks to its high fiber content, popcorn can fill you up and stave off hunger pangs.

Popcorn has plenty of hidden benefits that make it a healthy snack.



How exercise can help you live longer

There are many reasons to get in shape. Weight loss is a prime motivator, as is reversing a negative health effect, such as high cholesterol or increased diabetes risk. Routine exercise also can improve life expectancy.

WebMD says exercise keeps the body and brain healthy. That's why exercise should be an important component of daily life no matter one's age.

Research published in the journal *Immune Aging* found that how people age is 75 percent lifestyle and only 25 percent genetics, which underscores the importance of the lifestyle choices people make.

CARDIORESPIRATORY FITNESS

Many health experts say that cardiorespiratory fitness may be just as valuable a metric to determine overall health as blood pressure and lipid levels. People with a high aerobic capacity can deliver oxygen to tissues and cells efficiently to fuel exercise, according to data published in 2014 in the journal *Aging & Disease*. In a study involving 11,335 women, researchers compared V02 max, also known as aerobic capacity, in women with mortality data. Women who were fit from a cardiovascular

perspective had a lower death rate from all causes, irrespective of the women's weight.

MANAGE STRESS AND MOOD

Exercise has direct stress-busting benefits that can promote longevity. The Mayo Clinic says physical activity can increase the production of endorphins, which are the body's feel-good neurotransmitters. In addition, exercise can imitate the effects of stress, helping the body adjust its flight or fight response accordingly, and help them cope with mildly stressful situations. While engaged in exercise, people may forget about their problems as they are focused on the activity at hand.

IMPROVE BONE HEALTH

Strength training and physical activity can stave off the effects of frailty and osteoporosis, which affects bone strength. A study published in the *Journal of Internal Medicine* in 2017 found that hip fractures are associated with diminished quality of life and survival among the elderly. One in three adults aged 50 and over dies within 12 months of suffering a hip fracture, and older adults have a five- to eight-times greater risk of dying within three months

following a hip fracture. Building muscle strength, balance and bone density through exercise can reduce falls and frailty, helping to prevent fracture-related health risks.

ADDRESSES SARCOPENIA

The health and wellness resource Healthline defines sarcopenia as the loss of muscle mass specifically related to aging. Doctors once considered this muscle loss inevitable, and it can

affect stamina and lead to weakness. However, new indications suggest that exercise is the main treatment regimen for sarcopenia, particularly resistance training. This is designed to improve muscle strength and help balance hormone levels by turning protein into energy for older adults. These are just some of the ways exercise can help older adults live longer, healthier lives.



Preventive care and the pandemic

Procrastination is not typically considered a good thing. But as the world spent much of 2020 confronting the COVID-19 pandemic, putting certain things on hold became part of the new normal.

In an effort to reduce infection rates, public health officials with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization urged people to limit their in person interactions with people outside of their own households. As a result, many of the things people do on a regular basis, including seeing their physicians for wellness visits, were rescheduled.

It's understandable that many people postponed preventive care and wellness visits during the pandemic, but it's also potentially dangerous. For example, researchers with the Health Care Cost Institute found that childhood vaccinations declined by roughly 60 percent in mid-April 2020 compared with 2019. Other screenings and preventive exams, including mammograms, pap smears and colonoscopies, also declined by significant percentages during the pandemic compared to the previous year.

The National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion notes the power of preventive care is undeniable. In fact, the NCCDPHP points out that, while chronic diseases are among the most common and costly of all health problems, they're also among the most preventable. Annual wellness visits and early detection efforts like routine screenings for at-risk populations can uncover problems before they escalate into something more serious. In addition, annual physicals, which are provided free of charge through many health insurance policies, provide great opportunities for doctors to advise patients on their overall health and how to improve it if exams and blood work turn up any red flags.

Visiting a doctor during the pandemic

As vital as preventive care can be, it's understandable if people are hesitant to visit their doctors during the pandemic. But patients can take certain steps to calm their nerves about booking preventive care appointments during the pandemic.

- Schedule telemedicine appointments. The number of telemedicine appointments has skyrocketed during the pandemic. While the transition from predominantly in-

person appointments to telemedicine might have been a reluctant and rocky one at the start of the pandemic, many doctors' offices have since firmly established their telemedicine protocols. The Mayo Clinic advises patients who have not yet tried telemedicine to contact their doctors' offices to arrange an appointment.

- Inquire about office procedures. Doctors try to keep patients healthy, not get them sick. Various medical organizations, including the American Academy of Family Physicians, have provided thorough checklists to help physicians prepare their offices to welcome patients during the pandemic. Patients can ease their concerns by contacting their doctors' offices and asking them about their pandemic-related protocols.

- Don't hesitate to make requests. There's no such thing as being too safe from COVID-19, so patients can work with their doctors to calm their fears even further. Ask to pay copays over the phone and request that the front desk call you when the doctor is ready so you don't have to sit in the waiting room. Preventive care is an important component of health care, even during a pandemic.

In-Home Care Services Available for the Elderly

"I need help..." is usually the first response Guardians By The Sea hears when they answer their phone. It is a husband, wife, son or daughter, maybe even a close friend that is calling for personal help for someone they know and love. The calls range from "my dad has fallen and broken a hip; mom seems to be forgetting things and isn't taking her meds correctly; my neighbor is ill and needs help around her house, some shopping, meals, rides to doctor's appointments..." There are also calls from people who have just had surgery and are coming home to recuperate in an empty house. They need assistance - with almost everything.

These types of situations happen every day and create a dilemma for many families and individuals. What is your major concern after being told that you need to find help for an ailing parent, that they need in-home care? Where can you get the necessary help you or your loved one needs?

Vickie Howell and Sandra Wonacott have been providing the highest quality of care for seniors for more than 30 combined years. Very early in life they became caregivers to people they loved and soon understood that this was a life calling. In partnership, they created Guardians By The Sea, Inc., an exceptional In-Home Care Agency. Guardians By The Sea is state licensed, bonded

and insured. It is family owned and operated and offers services from

Port Orford, OR to Crescent City, CA. The agency is recognized by many area doctors, works in association with Coastal Home Health and Hospice, and cares for Veterans through the Roseburg Veteran's Administration. The agency provides a wide range of quality services that are tailored to each individual's needs, desires, likes and dislikes. The initial screening begins with a comprehensive personalized care assessment developed by the care coordinator, the senior and family member if available.

It is the goal of Guardians By The Sea to give seniors and their families peace of mind in knowing that their loved one is well cared for and safe in their own home. Caregivers are hired only if they truly love working with seniors and have the highest standards of character, integrity and compassion. They participate in a multi-phased training program, are thoroughly screened, have a criminal background check, are bonded, insured and CPR certified.

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Return to the gym safely

Gyms have begun to reopen in parts of the United States and Canada after being shuttered to prevent the spread of COVID-19. It may have been several months since members have stepped foot in these facilities. That means not only will fitness enthusiasts need to be smart about COVID-19 precautions, they also will need to reacclimate their bodies to routine exercise.

Fitness resolutions may come earlier this year as people are eager to regain fitness levels achieved prior to shutdowns. Going about a return to the gym in a smart way can prevent injuries and illness.

Ease into workouts

There will be a transition period as you get back to your gym routine. Start with flexibility workouts like yoga or pilates that can help reacclimate your body to physical activity. These will help increase blood flow, joint mobility and range of motion.

Expect that your stamina will have taken a hit from a prolonged absence at the gym. So if you once were a cardio master, it may take some time to build up to the speed and distance of a treadmill run or you may need to enroll in low-impact classes as your body adjusts.

The last thing you want to do is injure yourself, so the mantra "slow is pro" is key. Aim for exercising two or three times a week to begin with, and stick to shorter workouts of 30 minutes or less. Gradually increase the duration and frequency of workouts as you notice your endurance improving.

Stretching is essential after any workout, but especially helpful for those who are easing back into the gym. Stretches help avoid

muscle tightening and spasms that can come with being unaccustomed to working out.

Pandemic precautions

Returning to the gym also means sharing space with fellow members. Official guidance on how gyms are to operate now vary by state or province. However, certain safety tips can help you stay safer if you're ready to work out indoors. Try working out at off-peak hours when the gym is likely to be less crowded, even with capacity restrictions in place.

"Based on recent research, aerosolized droplets can remain airborne for up to three hours, making the potential for spread in crowded and confined spaces such as fitness studios problematic," said Dr. Robert Glatter, an emergency physician at Lenox Hill Hospital in NYC.

Maintaining distance and avoiding crowds is essential. Ask about air filtration and circulation at the gym. The rate of transmission of coronavirus may be higher in hot and crowded facilities without adequate circulation. Turn on fans or work close to open doors when possible.

Many gyms require that masks be worn while working out. This may mean members must take more breaks if the masks impede respiration during strenuous activity. While gyms may be spraying down equipment and high-touch areas, keep hand sanitizer or disinfectant wipes in your gym bag so you can do your own cleaning and keep your hands as clean as possible. Wash your hands after using any equipment if it's feasible to do so.

Now that gyms are open again, members must take additional precautions as they get back into the swing of things.



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The long-term effects of COVID-19

As the end of winter draws near, much of the world is marking its one-year anniversary living under COVID-19-related restrictions. That's certainly not a milestone worthy of celebration, and many people across the globe would insist it's felt like much more than a year since their lives were first affected by COVID-19.

By the time the calendar finally turned from 2020 to 2021, tens of millions of people across the globe had been infected with COVID-19. According to Worldometer, which manually analyzes, validates and aggregates data

from thousands of sources in real time, by early January 2021 there were more than 87 million documented cases of COVID-19 and nearly two million virus-related deaths across the globe. Nearly 62 million COVID-19 patients recovered from the virus by early 2021, but many of those people may suffer from long-term health effects.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is actively working to learn more about the potential long-term effects associated with COVID-19. Because of the relative infancy of the virus, it's impossible to

know just how long the long-term side effects in recovered patients will last. However, the CDC notes that the following are some of the most commonly reported long-term symptoms, which have been documented to linger anywhere from several weeks to even months after recovery.

- Fatigue • Shortness of breath
- Cough • Joint pain
- Chest pain

In addition to those symptoms, the CDC notes that some people who have recovered from COVID-19 have reported experiencing difficulty with thinking and concentration as well as depression. Recovering

patients also have reported symptoms like muscle pain, headache, intermittent fever, and heart palpitations.

More serious long-term complications are being investigated by the CDC. Such complications have thus far appeared to be less common, though the CDC cautions that more research and time is needed to determine clinical care for COVID-19 as well as how many people may ultimately experience these symptoms.

- Cardiovascular: Inflammation of the heart muscle

- Respiratory: Lung function abnormalities
- Renal: Acute kidney injury
- Dermatologic: Rash, hair loss
- Neurological: Smell and taste problems, sleep issues, difficulty with concentration, memory problems
- Psychiatric: depression, anxiety, changes in mood

As the world continues to combat COVID-19, public health agencies like the CDC are learning more about the virus, including some long-term side effects that could affect patients after they have recovered.



Why seniors are at greater risk for COVID-19

It has been more than a year since the world learned about the novel coronavirus COVID-19. Since December 2019, there have been tens of millions of reported cases and nearly two million deaths worldwide attributed to COVID-19, according to data from the Johns Hopkins University Center for Systems Science and Engineering.

Experts are still unclear how prevalent the virus really is because a large number of cases are not reported due to mild or asymptomatic infections. But there's no denying COVID-19 can be very risky for one large segment of the population.

The chances for severe illness from COVID-19 increases with age, with older adults at the greatest risk, offers the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The CDC further indicates that eight out of 10 COVID-19 deaths reported in the United States have been in adults who are 65 and older. Compared to younger adults, older individuals are more likely to require hospitalization if they contract the illness. People between the ages of 75 and 84 are at eight-times more likely to be hospitalized and 220 times more likely to die from COVID-19 than the youngest patients.

There are some key reasons why older adults are at higher risk. Vineet Menachery, an immunologist at the University of Texas Medical Branch who

studies coronaviruses and their effects on aging immune systems, older adults are more likely to suffer from underlying conditions that can hinder the body's ability to recover from illness. In addition, a greater propensity for inflammation in the body and changes in the way the immune system responds with age are other mechanisms that increase seniors' risk for COVID-19. Furthermore, COVID-19 affects the part of the lungs that delivers oxygen to the bloodstream and removes carbon dioxide. As a person gets older, the lungs are not as elastic and this can affect gas exchange and other functions. Being older coupled with having cardiovascular disease, asthma and diabetes also can raise the threat level of COVID-19.

Seniors must be extra diligent to engage in behaviors that reduce their risks. Epidemiologists recommend the following:

- Wash or sanitize hands whenever possible, especially upon entering and leaving public buildings.
- Shop and travel during off-peak hours, such as early in the morning, to avoid crowds.
- Use contactless payment methods rather than handling money.
- Ask friends and family to do your shopping and run errands for you.
- Wear masks over the nose and mouth and stay at least six feet away from others.

- If the COVID-19 vaccine is available to you, ask your doctor more about it and get vaccinated if it's safe to do so.

Learn more about at-risk groups at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html.

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Chetco Medical & Aesthetics

Chetco Medical & Aesthetics is a premier medical clinic in Brookings that offers comprehensive medical care as well as aesthetics services. Specialties of the clinic include Internal Medicine, Geriatric Medicine, Weight Loss, and Aesthetics. The services are provided by four medical professionals: Dr. Jay Patel, MD, Dr. Palak Patel, MD, Shannon Rasmussen, PA-C, and Pooja Patel, PA-C. Chetco Medical & Aesthetics is currently accepting new patients.

Chetco Medical & Aesthetics recently expanded its aesthetics services with Bellezza, a brand-new state-of-the-art medical spa that opened its doors in November 2020. Bellezza offers a broad selection of aesthetics services including Botox, fillers, CoolSculpting/CoolTone, and skin rejuvenation services such as laser resurfacing, sun and age spot removal, microneedling, and medical grade facials. Other services include hair restoration treatments, women's intimate health, laser hair removal and many

more. Most recently, Bellezza added Liposuction with radiofrequency-assist, which has shown amazing results for fat reduction and body contouring.

Chetco Medical & Aesthetics began with the medical practice of Dr. Jay Patel. He is board certified in Internal Medicine, Geriatric Medicine, and Obesity Medicine and has been a practicing physician in the Brookings community since 1987. His practice includes treatment of a broad spectrum of medical diseases such as managing both common and complex illnesses of adolescents, adults and the elderly.

His son, Dr. Palak Patel, joined the practice in 2016. Dr. Palak is board certified in Internal Medicine and Geriatrics. He grew up in Brookings, along with his twin brother and his sister, Roochita Patel. He attended the University of California San Diego for his undergraduate studies. He completed his medical education at Oregon Health and Sciences University

(OHSU) in Portland. He then went on to Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in New Hampshire to complete his internal medicine training prior to graduating from his geriatric medicine fellowship program at University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in Pennsylvania, one of the top geriatric programs in the country.

In 2016, the fat-freezing CoolSculpting device was added to their practice, and the doctors were pleasantly surprised by the feedback from their patients. They noticed there was a gap in options for medical-grade aesthetics services in the area, so Dr. Palak became trained and certified in aesthetics procedures including Botox, fillers, and laser treatments and started offering them in the clinic and Chetco Medical and Aesthetics was born. The doctors have seen increased interest in these types of services over the past 2 years, so they decided to invest in having a dedicated space and to expand the range of services available to match the community's interest.

Roochita Patel, sister to Dr. Palak, has taken a sabbatical from her corporate roles in San Francisco to lead the build-out and setup of Bellezza, along with Dr. Palak and Dr. Jay. She grew up in Brookings and attended the University of California, Berkeley for her undergraduate studies, where she earned a double-major in Economics and Legal Studies, and a minor in Business Administration. She has spent the majority of her career working in Silicon Valley where she held executive positions in operations, analytics, and finance at several companies including Walmart.com and Minted. She resides in San Francisco, and is very excited to be able to help bring services that typically are only available in larger cities to the town where she grew up. "We've worked with a local builder and with a designer who specializes in medical spa design to craft a premium space and experience at Bellezza for the local community," Roochita Patel said at the time of the opening.



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